



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

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Memorandum

TO: Operations Committee

DATE: September 4, 2009

FR: Deputy Executive Director, Policy

RE: TransLink[®] Fare Media Transition Plans

Five transit operators are currently using TransLink[®] to collect fares: AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, Golden Gate Transit and Ferry, and San Francisco Muni. MTC requested that these operators submit plans to describe how they will transition their existing prepaid fare media, e.g. tickets and passes, to TransLink[®]-only availability within the next two years. Staff has invited executive staff from each of these operators to provide an overview of these plans to this Committee. Prior to the operators' presentations, MTC staff will highlight when the operators intend to transition their respective pre-paid media, and put these plans in the overall context of ridership growth for the TransLink[®] program. As shown in the attached powerpoint slides, the transitions proposed in these plans are important in not only establishing TransLink[®] as the region's primary transit fare payment option, but also leveraging the region's \$94 million investment, to date, for the benefit of transit riders and transit operators.

Contractual Benchmark and Timing for Transition

The shift of prepaid fare media is essential to the program's achieving a critical contractual benchmark – a volume of 20 million transactions per month. Until volume reaches that level, the TransLink[®] Contract requires payments of a supplemental operating fee of about \$95,000/month to the TransLink[®] Contractor. (In comparison, the system processed about 750,000 transactions in July 2009.) Staff has projected that the program can realistically achieve the 20 million transaction level by Fall of 2010 with the successful transition of existing fare media to TransLink. We need to plan for steady and continuous growth over the next year in order to not only meet this target, but also ensure a smooth transition for customers and operators. For AC Transit and Golden Gate Transit, who have been operating TransLink since late 2006, we asked that their transitions be complete by June 30, 2010. For the remaining 3 agencies, we asked that the transitions be complete within 2 years of their respective TransLink revenue ready dates. We also asked the agencies to describe any constraints limiting a transition and the steps necessary to overcome these constraints.

Comparison of Transition Target Dates to Projected Delivery Dates

Staff highlights the following from the plans:

- AC Transit proposes to not complete transition of any of its existing pre-paid media until January 2011, six months after the requested deadline. AC Transit omitted dates for passes

and ride tickets provided through social services agencies. Also requiring further discussion is the potential transition of BEAR, Class and Easy Passes.

- BART's plan meets the requested deadline (August 2011) for its major fare products (BART-only EZ Rider smart card and High Value Discount tickets.) Remaining fare products still need to be coordinated.
- Caltrain (requested deadline of Aug 2010) has not provided specific dates for a transition of any of its pre-paid media: monthly passes, 8-ride tickets, Go Passes or Caltrain+Muni monthly passes.
- Golden Gate Transit and Ferry's plan meets our requested deadline (July 2010) for most of its products. Its outstanding transition issue is the need to support certain paper fare products until Marin Transit District becomes operational with TransLink®.
- For most of SFMTA's adult full-fare passes, SFMTA's plan meets the September 2010 requested deadline. SFMTA proposes to transition other fare media, including youth discount passes, by January 2011.

Attachments A-1 through A-5 are each of the individual plans submitted by the operators.

Recommendations

Based on our initial review of the plans, staff recommends the following next steps:

1. Seek further information from transit agencies. Staff should continue discussions with operators to improve the plans, including:
 - Clarify missing information regarding dates and fare products, as well understand if it is feasible to move up/confirm dates to meet our targeted deadlines, in particular for AC Transit and Caltrain.
 - Seek more specificity on how the operator will get from the current low level transaction volumes to the much higher level expected at the conclusion of their transition.
 - Resolve approach to address agreed-upon constraints.
2. Update the Regional Transit Coordination Plan. The final versions of each of the operators' fare media transition plans will be incorporated into an update of the Regional Transit Coordination Plan.

Ann Flemer

AF: mc

Attachment A-1
AC Transit

Attachment A-2
BART

Attachment A-3
Caltrain

Attachment A-4
Golden Gate Transit and Ferry

Attachment A-5
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority